

## Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07  
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00  
DODE-00 NSC-05 /064 W  
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R 011251Z APR 77  
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INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA  
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AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
USMISSION NATO  
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN  
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AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK  
USNMR SHAPE  
/USCINCEUR  
CINCUSNAVEUR  
CINCUSAFE  
USDOCOSOUTH

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 OSLO 1568

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: NATO, OCON, AWACS, MILI, NO  
SUBJECT: NATO AEW: NORWAY VIEWS AWACS IN NIMROD'S WAKE

REF: USNATO 1841

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SUMMARY: DEFENSE UNDER SECRETARY JOHAN JORGEN HOLST CALLED ON  
AMBASSADOR MAR 31 TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE GON STEPS IN LIGHT OF  
RECENT UK MOD'S DECISION TO CONTINUE WITH NIMROD PROGRAM. HOLST  
UNDERSCORED GON'S RELUCTANCE TO PRESENT BILL TO STORTING  
REQUESTING FUNDS FOR NORWAY'S AWACS SHARE BEFORE FUTURE OF AWACS  
PROGRAM CLARIFIED ITSELF. HE REQUESTED USG'S OPINION ON  
FIRMNESS OF UK POSITION AND ON CHANCES THAT NATO WILL BE ABLE

TO PROCEED WITH PROGRAM. HOLST HIMSELF WILL VISIT LONDON APR 12 FOR TALKS WITH UK MOD OFFICIALS. WASHINGTON'S PRECEPTIONS WOULD THEN BE FED INTO GON MID- TO END-APRIL DISCUSSIONS IN TIME FOR END-APRIL DECISION ON WHETHER TO SUBMIT AUTHORIZATION REQUEST TO STORTING OR WHETHER TO RECONSIDER OPTIONS IN EFFORT TO IDENTIFY NEXT BEST WAY FOR NORWAY TO DEAL WITH AEW PROBLEM. ONE OPTION HOLST SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED WAS A BILATERAL ARRANGEMENT WITH U.S. END SUMMARY.

1. MAR 25 SPECIAL DPC: GON'S DEFENSE UNDER SECRETARY HOLST CALLED ON AMBASSADOR MAR 31 TO DISCUSS PRESENT STATUS OF AWACS PROGRAM, EFFECT OF RECENT UK DECISION ON NIMROD, PROBLEMS IT PRESENTED TO GON, AND ALTERNATIVE WAYS GON MIGHT NEXT PROCEED.

2. HOLST REVIEWED STEPS THAT GON HAD TAKEN IN PREPARATION FOR MAR 25 DPC MEETING THAT HAD LED TO VERY POSITIVE AWACS POSITION MOD HANSEN REFLECTED AT BRUSSELS SESSIONS. A DRAFT AUTHORIZATION BILL HAD IN FACT BEEN PREPARED FOR SUBMISSION TO GON CABINET AND STORTING ASSUMING DPC DECISION TO GO AHEAD.

3. IN HOLST'S OPINION MULLEY WENT TO NATO TO GATHER ALLIED SUPPORT FOR A UK DECISION ALREADY MADE TO OPT FOR NIMROD. HOLST BELIEVES MULLEY OVERPLAYED HIS HAND, ANNOYED MANY ALLIED REPRESENTATIVES, AND THUS FAILED TO COME OUT OF MEETING WITH SUPPORT HE SOUGHT.

4. DEFMIN HANSEN AND HOLST RETURNED FROM BRUSSELS UNSURE OF WHETHER TO PROCEED WITH GAME PLAN AGREED TO BEFORE MAR 25, I.E., WHETHER TO SUBMIT DRAFT AUTHORIZATION BILL TO CABINET DISCUSSION  
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FIRST WEEK AFTER EASTER AND THEN TO STORTING SHORTLY THEREAFTER.

5. POLITICAL PROBLEM: MOD HANSEN IS RELUCTANT TO GO AHEAD AND SUBMIT THE BILL IF IN FACT AWACS IS COLLAPSING. IN AN ELECTION YEAR HE CLEARLY DOES NOT WANT TO OPEN HIMSELF UP TO PARLIAMENTARY EXPRESSION OF DOUBTS CONCERNING WISDOM OF HIS REQUESTING AUTHORIZATION AND FUNDS FOR PROGRAM PUBLICLY PERCEIVED TO BE DEAD OR DYING.

6. HOLST, THEREFORE, ASKED IF WE WOULD ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN WASHINGTON'S ANALYSIS OF UK FLEXIBILITY ON NIMROD DECISION AND ALSO WASHINGTON'S OPINION AS TO WHETHER GON SHOULD PROCEED WITH CABINET AND STORTING CONSIDERATION OF AWACS AUTHORIZATION BILL.

7. NEXT STEPS: HOLST HIMSELF PLANS TO TRAVEL TO LONDON APR 13 FOR MEETINGS WITH HMG'S DEFENSE OFFICIALS ON ENTIRE AWACS QUESTION IN EFFORT TO MAKE OWN ASSESSMENT PRIOR TO SITTING DOWN WITH HANSEN TO DECIDE ON NEXT STEPS. HE PLANS TO UNDERSCORE TO BRITISH

COST IN TERMS OF ALLIANCE SOLIDARITY A NIMROD DECISION WOULD IMPOSE.

8. POSSIBLE OPTIONS: IN WEIGHING BEST COURSE OF ACTION, HOLST SAID GON WOULD HAVE TO ANALYZE THE VIABILITY OF A MIXED NIMROD-AWACS SYSTEM ALTHOUGH HIS INITIAL PERSONAL VIEW IS THAT IT IS NOT. IN ANY EVENT, HE HAS ALREADY INFORMED HMG PRIVATELY THAT GON NOT YET READY TO COMMENT ON A MIXED FORCE. OTHER POINTS TO BE CONSIDERED WOULD BE WHETHER A BILATERAL U.S.-GON ARRANGEMENT BASED ON U.S. AWACS AIRCRAFT OPERATING FROM ICELAND IS FEASIBLE, AND HOW AND WHEN TO UPGRADE NADGE. HOLST SAID HE HAD NOT REALLY THOUGHT THROUGH ASPECTS OF BILATERAL OPTION BEYOND ENVISAGING A METHOD OF OPERATION SIMILAR TO THAT NOW USED FOR THE P-3S. HE THOUGHT NORWAY'S PEACETIME PROHIBITION AGAINST FOREIGN MILITARY BASING WOULD PRESENT FEW DIFFICULTIES IF U.S. AVOIDED USING SENSATIONAL WORDS SUCH AS "BASING" AND "FORWARD BASES."

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-----020313Z 023097 /22

R 011251Z APR 77  
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USDOCOSOUTH

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9. HOLST EMPHASIZED THAT ANY FEEDBACK WE COULD OBTAIN FROM WASHINGTON BEFORE HIS APR 13 DEPARTURE FOR LONDON WOULD BE USEFUL IN DISCUSSIONS WITH UK. HOWEVER, MAJOR UTILITY OF USG INPUT WOULD BE DURING SUBSEQUENT GON CONSIDERATION OF AWACS.

10. COMMENT: WHILE UNDOUBTEDLY TRUE THAT NORWAY WOULD WELCOME  
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WASHINGTON'S VIEW ON FUTURE OF AWACS AND ON FIRMNESS OF UK POSITION IT IS HIGHLY LIKELY THAT HOLST AND HIS COLLEAGUES HAVE ALREADY DECIDED THAT AWACS IS DEAD AS A NATO PROJECT (DISCUSSIONS WITH VISITING FRG MOD LEBER AND STAFF UNDOUBTEDLY HAD SOME INFLUENCE) AND ARE MORE INTERSTED IN FEELING US OUT ON ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS TO AEW PROBLEM. HOLST'S AND NORWAY'S HISTORICAL PREFERENCE FOR BILATERAL U.S.-GON DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS IS WELL KNOWN AND WOULD PROBABLY LEAD GON TO FAVOR SUCH AN AGREEMENT FOR A COOPERATIVE AEW EFFORT. ANY MAJOR U.S.-GON PROJECT, SUCH AS AWACS, WOULD TEND TO WORK AGAINST OUR GOALS OF ENCOURAGING NORWAY'S CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH EUROPE AND THEIR MORE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN NATO. ALTHOUGH AT THE SAME TIME IT WOULD SERVE TO STRENGTHEN OUR TIES WITH OSLO.  
ANDERS

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009